

## **Wilson Backs Head Start Teachers**

### **Introduces New Legislation**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - On the heels of President Obama's call to reform America's education system, today Congressman Charlie Wilson (D-OH) introduced the Give Our Teachers a Head Start Act. This legislation would permit Head Start teachers to take a tax break of up to \$250 if they've used their own money to purchase classroom supplies.

Head Start is a federally funded child development program that serves low-income students and their families. Since its inception in 1965, Head Start has helped prepare 25 million pre-school aged children for kindergarten through comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent-involvement services.

Head Start teachers are compensated about \$20,000 less per year than kindergarten teachers, yet kindergarten teachers are allowed a similar tax deduction. With the current economy, more and more Head Start teachers and teachers' aides are having to dig into their own pockets to pay for classroom materials. "When funding falls short and teachers sacrifice to fill the gap, it seems only fair that they should at least get a tax deduction," Rep. Wilson said in a speech as he introduced his bill to the U.S House.

Rep. Wilson's speech follows:

“Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce Give Our Teachers a Head Start Act, a bill which makes strong investments in today's Head Start teachers and teachers' aides.

In this challenging economy, Head Start programs around the nation are feeling the consequences. And when budget shortfalls hit these programs, it is the children who suffer.

Many teachers and teachers' aides attempt to fill the gap and make personal financial sacrifices to provide their students with classroom supplies. The average Head Start teacher with a B.A. degree earns almost half of the average kindergarten teacher, but is excluded from the current law permitting K-12 teachers an income tax deduction. This legislation would permit Head Start teachers and teachers' aides the ability to subtract from their gross income up to \$250 in expenses associated with the purchases of classroom supplies.

When funding falls short and teachers sacrifice to fill the gap, it seems only fair that they should at least get a tax deduction. I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.”

To listen to Congressman Wilson's floor speech, [click here](#) .